

# ROUTE 6 CORRIDOR STUDY

## Town of Bethel, CT

Final Report  
December 2007



BFJ Planning

**ROUTE 6 CORRIDOR STUDY**  
**Bethel, Connecticut**

**Prepared for:**

Planning & Zoning Commission  
Town of Bethel  
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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of Corridor Plan

The purpose of this study is to develop a plan for the Route 6 Corridor. It encourages a greater mix and intensity of land use and includes design standards to enhance key intersections and circulation on Route 6. The plan is a guide for future development on underutilized and vacant properties in the study area. It provides for the preservation of important open spaces with design guidelines on roadway design, development sites, streetscape and architectural character. Finally, the plan presents a development framework for the entire corridor and proposes a conceptual layout for potential development parcels.

### 1.2 Community Participation

Two public workshops were held as part of the planning process in order to solicit input from the community on existing conditions and to get feedback on a conceptual design for the corridor. At the first workshop in June 2007 participants discussed key issues within small groups and then reported their findings back to all participants. The workshop focused on identification of the study area's strengths and opportunities and concluded with a discussion of an overall design concept for the corridor. A summary of this workshop is included in this report as Appendix B. The planning team held three review sessions with a Town Steering Committee and conducted meetings with owners of key parcels within the corridor prior to conducting a second public workshop on December 5, 2007. At this workshop draft copies of the report were distributed to everyone who attended.



Public Workshop



Roundtable discussion

## 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 2.1 Study Area Boundary

Route 6 in Bethel is parallel with I-84 which links Interchange 8 in Danbury with Interchange 9 in Newtown as shown in Figure 1. The Route 6 Corridor study area in the Stony Hill section of Bethel extends for approximately one and a half miles from the Town of Newtown border west to the City of Danbury. Figure 2 illustrates the study area boundary which extends northward from Route 6 across Hawleyville Road to include the residential development located adjacent to I-84. To the south, the study area includes the Town-owned Mitchell Park, the Walnut Hill Community Church, and vacant property adjacent to the Big Y site and the Hollandia store. In addition to Big Y, the corridor is anchored at the west entry point by the new Target store.

### 2.2 Land Use

The range of development in this area is characterized by a broad mix of parcel sizes, building types and uses. The photographs in Figure 3 provide an overview of the visual character of the area. In addition to properties with frontage on Route 6, the study area includes some properties with frontage on Old Hawleyville Road, Weed Road, McNeil Road, Vail Road and Hawleyville Road, for a total of 293 acres. Existing development comprises a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, open space and vacant areas (Figure 4). The residential developments in this area are mostly single-family homes, located on local roads north of Route 6, while most of the commercial development is concentrated along Route 6 with frontage on the corridor.



Route 6 looking West



Big Y Departmental Store



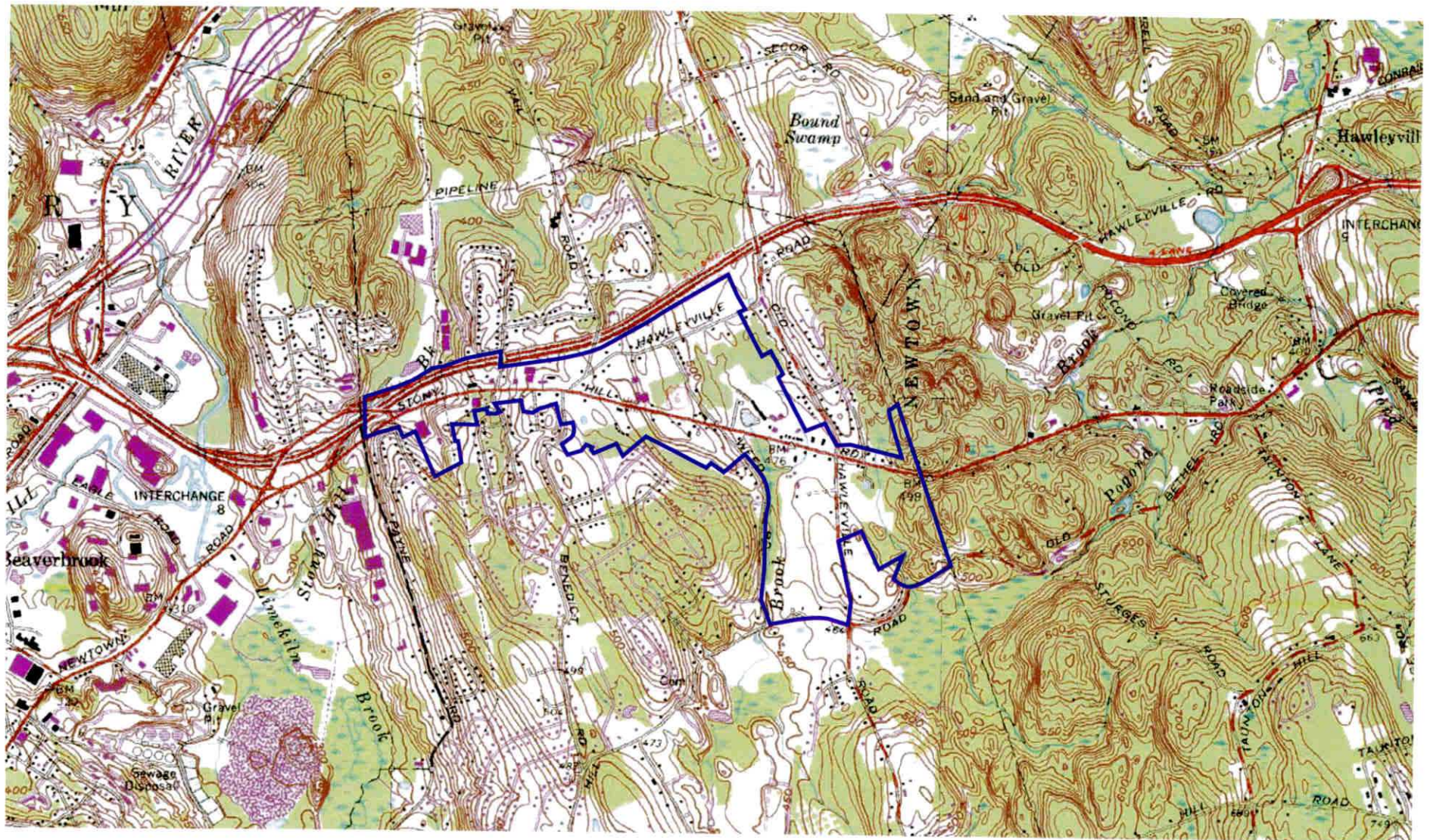


FIGURE 1: CONTEXT (USGS MAP)

TOWN OF BETHEL, CONNECTICUT

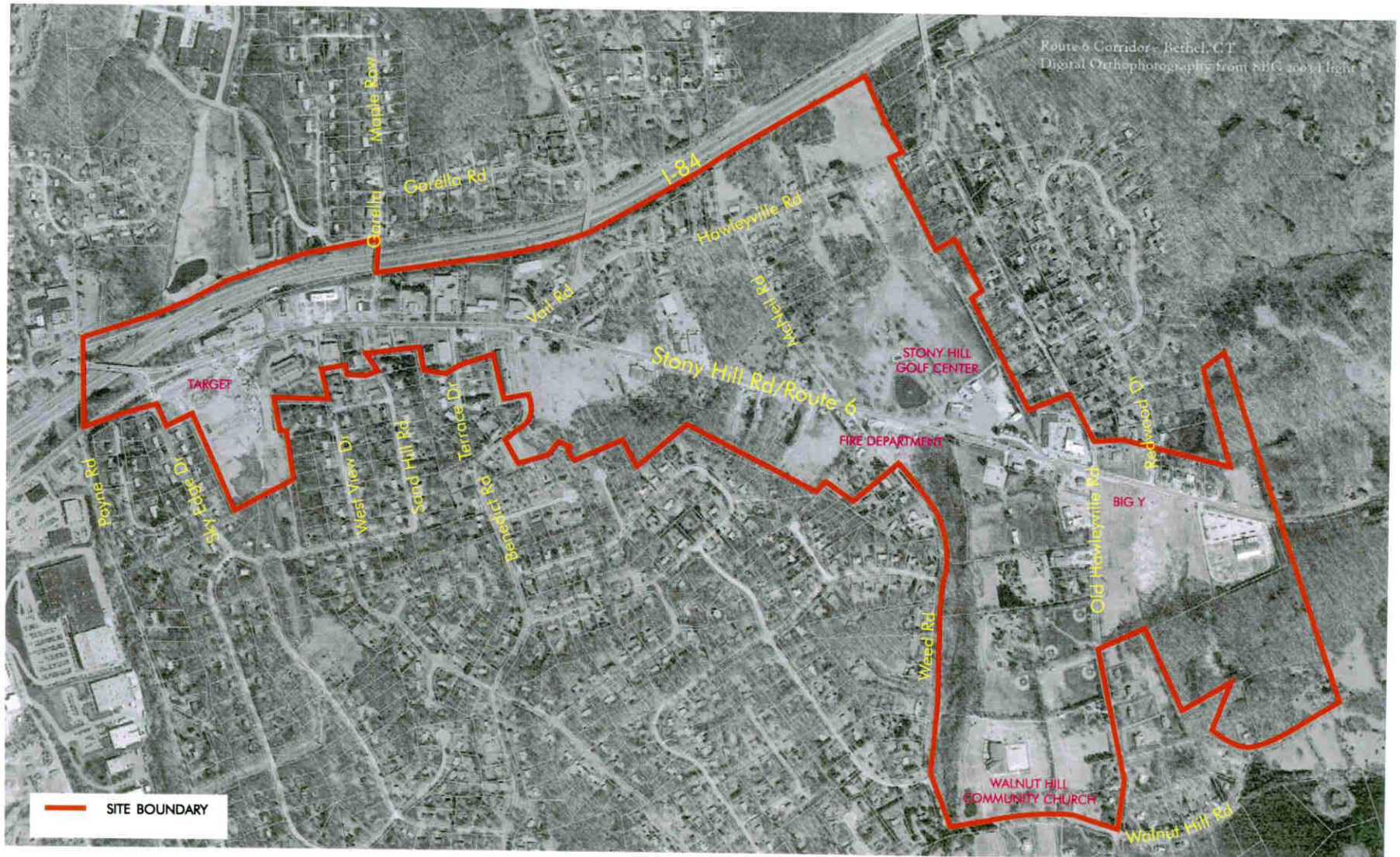
SOURCE: USGS



0 600 1200 ft

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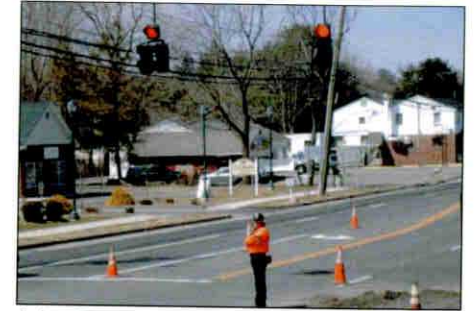
Parking Lot on Rt 6 adjacent to Big Y



Residential Properties on Redwood Dr



Stony Hill Dental Care- Rt 6/Redwood Dr



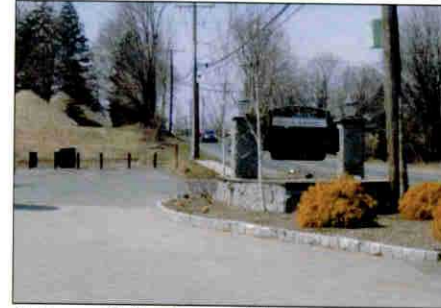
Salon, Restaurants and Retail on Rt 6



Commercial Plaza on Route 6



Surface Parking on Rt 6/Old Hawleyville Rd



Restaurant & Development Sites on Rt 6



Vacant Parcel on Hawleyville Rd



Rt 6 looking West



Office Use on Rt 6 near I-84



Target on Rt 6



Residential Site on Sky Edge Ln

FIGURE 3: SITE PHOTOS



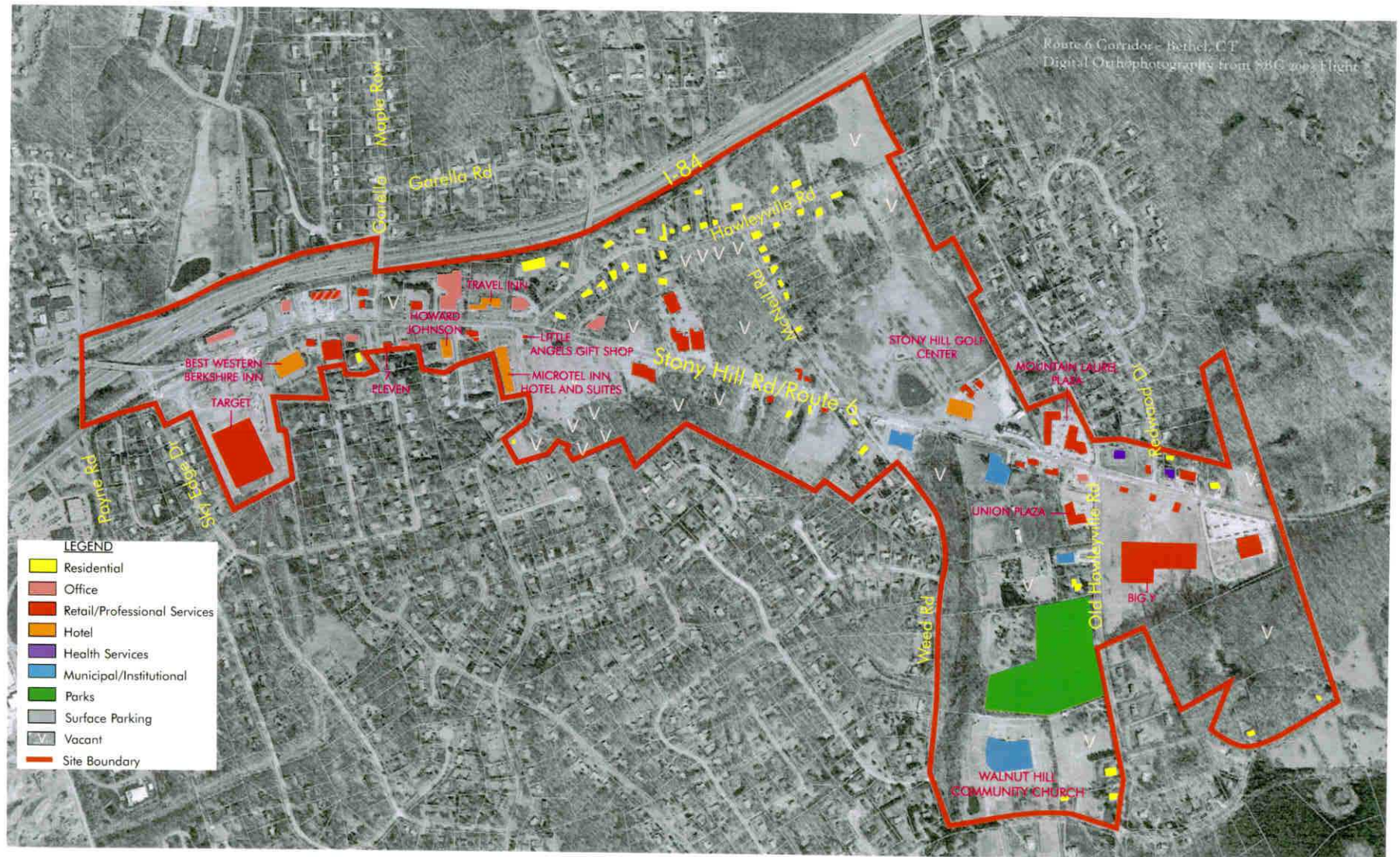


FIGURE 4: EXISTING LAND USE



The two big retail stores, Big Y and Target are located on the east and west end of the study area. Other commercial uses include strip malls, several small retail outlets, hotel/motel uses, offices, restaurants and gas stations. The Union and Mountain Laurel Plaza malls, which include restaurants as well as specialized services and convenience retail such as nail salons, insurance agents, optometrists, liquor stores, and party supplies are both located closer to the eastern section of Route 6. Best Western Berkshire Inn, Howard Johnson, Microtel Inn, Travel Inn and Best Western Stony Hill are the five hotels/motels that are part of the hospitality industry in this area. The dental and doctor's offices are located at the far eastern end of the study area. This study area includes two educational facilities (Kinder Care Learning Center and the University of Connecticut), the Walnut Hill community church, a fire department, a golf center and recreation fields. A significant proportion of the study area is undeveloped or underutilized. There are twenty-two vacant properties in the study area, nine of which are along Route 6. Some of these parcels are wooded and others cleared. Along Route 6, the study area has scattered, low density development that is interspersed with undeveloped properties and surface parking.

Most parcels in the Route 6 Corridor study area are small or medium sized developed properties, but the area also includes several large-scale parcels that are either undeveloped or under-developed. These include the Stony Hill Golf Center site (approximately 36 acres), the Bridgeport Diocese site (approximately 12 acres), the Edward Bautista property and the ten acre Steiner site. The existing development plan (Figure 5) illustrates the location of the large-scale parcels available for development.

The approximate acreage breakdown of existing land uses is:

Residential: 52 acres  
 Commercial: 102 acres  
 Municipal/Institutional: 23 acres  
 Park and Recreation Space: 16 acres  
 Vacant: 70 acres



Large parcels with surface parking



Existing commercial uses on Route 6 corridor